



Reference: 20170324-9411

12/2/11/6/4

Enquiries: S Rampou

Curriculum GET Minute: DCG 0009/2017

To: Deputy Directors-General, Chief Directors, Directors, Heads: Curriculum Coordination and Advice, Circuit Managers, Deputy Chief Education Specialists, GET Coordinators, Intermediate Phase Subject Advisers and Principals of all ordinary and independent schools with Grade 7 classes

Subject: AstroQuiz 2017 — Grade 7 learners

1. The AstroQuiz is a science competition for Grade 7 learners that is based on astronomy-related themes and linked to the "Earth and Beyond" section of the Natural Sciences syllabus.
2. The AstroQuiz is a project funded by the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) and run provincially by the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO). This project is aimed at:
 - encouraging an interest in Science in primary schools;
 - improving classroom practice;
 - creating awareness and insight into basic astronomy, Science and Mathematics; and
 - fostering an interest in career opportunities in astronomy and other sciences.
3. The AstroQuiz has been successfully implemented in the province since 2006 and interest in this competition has grown phenomenally. In 2016 nineteen schools participated in the final round of the competition. Star College in Metro Central represented our province at national level. There are attractive prizes for the provincial top ten schools and the winning school.
4. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) encourages all schools with Grade 7 learners to participate in the 2017 AstroQuiz.
5. The resource pack for the AstroQuiz and an exemplar question paper can be downloaded from the SAAO AstroQuiz website at www.astroquiz.saa.ac.za. If a school needs a hard copy of the AstroQuiz booklet they can request it by sending an email with the name of the school and postal address to help@astroquiz.saa.ac.za.

6. The WCED advises that all schools use the AstroQuiz resource pack and the exemplar question paper to give learners practice in writing the quiz. This should be an open-book activity for groups of four learners each, with each group working as a team.
7. Interested schools must register for the quiz directly with the SAAO via the AstroQuiz website. Registrations open on 19 April 2017.
8. All communication with the SAAO will be done via email and/or SMS. Teachers may choose their preferred means of communication when registering and are invited to join the AstroQuiz mailing list on <http://astroquiz.saa0.ac.za/join-the-mailing-list/> to stay informed about the quiz.
9. To enter the AstroQuiz schools must identify teams of four learners from Grade 7 to represent the school.
10. Schools should arrange to participate in the first two rounds of the provincial AstroQuiz online. Schools are encouraged to participate with as many teams as possible in the first round. There will be a trial round for learners to practise the quiz online. Learners may use their cell phones to participate online. Schools compete by answering a set of 30 questions in each round. All schools will answer the same questions. The teams are given a fixed 60 seconds per question. Teams may discuss answers quietly among themselves. Only one team per school may participate in the second round. Participating learners may not take resource material into the quiz venue.
11. The first two rounds of the provincial AstroQuiz will be held at school under the supervision of the teacher in charge. Round 1 will be held on Friday, 26 May 2017 and Round 2 on Friday, 28 July 2017.
12. Provincial Rounds 3 and 4 will be held on the same day at the SAAO in Observatory, Cape Town on Friday, 25 August 2017. All districts in the province will be represented in the third round. The SAAO will be responsible for transporting teams to the provincial Rounds 3 and 4 and the final national event. The winning school will represent the province in the national competition that will be held from 04 to 06 October 2017. The venue for the final national event will be announced at a later stage.
13. For any further questions or clarity about the competition kindly contact the SAAO directly or visit their website for more information:
Tel: 021 460 9369 (Buzani)
 021 460 9319 (Thembela)
 021 460 9328 (Christian)
Fax: 086 554 1330
Email: help@astroquiz.saa0.ac.za
Website: <http://astroquiz.saa0.ac.za>

14. Principals are requested to bring this minute to the attention of all Grade 7 Natural Sciences teachers.

SIGNED: PAD BEETS

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT

DATE: 2017-04-26